

10. GOLDEN ORIOLE (*ORIOLOUS ORIOLOUS*) NEST IN BOMBAY

I was surprised when I learnt that there was no authentic record of the Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*) nesting in the Bombay area, the nearest record of nests, as Mr. Humayun Abdulali informed me being from Pune in the Deccan and from Baroda in Gujarat state.

I had observed the oriole breeding during 1979-80 around Kandivli, a suburb in North Bombay. Also, I had found a pair making a nest sometime in May-80 on a jambhool tree near the MLA hostel at Churchgate. Unfortunately this pair did not breed there and the nest was subsequently destroyed. However, this year (1981), on 8th May, a nest of the Golden Oriole was found on the grounds of a cattle farm at Kandivli.

The nest was about thirty five feet high on an overhanging branch of a huge Rain tree (*Pithecolobium saman*). According to observations that could be made from below the

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bird was probably incubating. It would occasionally be away from its nest for as long as 15-20 minutes after which one of the birds would come and settle in the nest—incubate? This was surprising, because hardly 25 feet from the Oriole's nest was a nest of the Common House Crow (*Corvus splendens*), where the bird was incubating. Also not very far from the Oriole's nest, a Black Drongo (*Dicrurus adsimilis*) was seen making a nest which it abandoned when the nest was more than halfway through.

This nest of the Golden Oriole being a new record for Bombay and its surroundings, I contacted Mr. Humayun Abdulali, who came down and saw it on the 14th May. On 29th May, the female Oriole was seen bringing food to its nest, to its nestlings. According to a friend, Joslin, the nestlings flew away in the second week of June.

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11. NOCTURNAL HABITS OF BLACK DRONGO (*DICRURUS ADSIMILIS*)

On many occasions I have observed drongos hawking insects at street lamps at night. Several birds would perch on the electric wire and make aerial sallies on insects attracted by the light, especially after first rains when swarms of insects come out of the ground and fly around street lamps. Once I saw a drongo making a

dash at a Spotted Owlet (*Athene brama*) which was perching on a wire. What is interesting is that the drongos appeared to be quite active around the light even though it was pitch dark everywhere.

No mention has been made about this behaviour in available literature.

27A/1, CIVIL LINES,
NAGPUR,
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